

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 04967 181231Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----043175 181232Z /23
O O 181213Z MAR 78 ZFF 4
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6882
USMISSION USNATO NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BONN 04967

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MNUC, GW
SUBJECT: ERW: ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS

REF: BONN 4964

1. RUTH CALLED THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR THIS MORNING TO FOLLOW UP YESTERDAY'S CONSULTATION (REPORTED REFTEL). HE SAID CRYPTICALLY THAT THE GERMANS HAD LEARNED FROM REPORTS OUT OF WASHINGTON THAT USG THOUGHT THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOME FRG CONFUSION ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE US/UK PAPER. HE ADDED THAT THIS HAD NOW BEEN CLARIFIED, AND THAT IT INCREASED HIS CONFIDENCE THAT OUR DIFFERENCES COULD BE RESOLVED SWIFTLY.

2. RUTH ADDED THAT HE FELT IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR US TO STAY IN TOUCH THIS WEEKEND "AS REGARDS PROCEDURAL ACTIVITY." WHEN THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAID WE MIGHT HAVE A MESSAGE TO DISCUSS HERE BETWEEN NOW AND THE MARCH 20 NAC, THOUGH ACTION MIGHT SHIFT FULLY TO NATO, AND THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO ACT QUICKLY, RUTH SAID THE FRG WAS FULLY PREPARED TO DO SO.

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3. RUTH ENDED THE CONVERSATION BY ASKING IF THE US FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE CONSIDERATIONS BEHIND THE GERMAN PROPOSALS. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAID HE BELIEVED WE DID UNDERSTAND THEM, AS WELL AS THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED, BUT THAT HE WAS CONCERNED WHETHER WE WOULD HAVE THE TIME TO GET ALL OUR DUCKS IN

A ROW BETWEEN NOW AND MARCH 22, RUTH ANSWERED: "DON'T WORRY; WE WILL."

4. COMMENT: AS IN BLECH'S CALL TO THE CHARGE LAST NIGHT, RUTH WAS CLEARLY SIGNALLING THAT THE GERMANS WERE READY TO CHANGE LANGUAGE QUICKLY ONCE THEY SAW A CONSENSUS DEVELOPING. SINCE WE ARE NOT FULLY CERTAIN HOW THE MARCH 20 MEETING IS NOW PLANNED TO PROCEED, WE ARE NOT CONFIDENT WHETHER HIS INITIAL REMARKS MIGHT MEAN THAT THE GERMAN AMENDMENTS PRESENTED YESTERDAY TO THE UK/US TEXT MIGHT BE PRESENTED DIFFERENTLY DEPENDING UPON THE POINT AT WHICH THE TEXT WAS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE NAC. USNATO MAY BE ABLE TO DETERMINE THIS.

5. WE STILL BELIEVE IT WOULD BE GOOD TO PRESENT TO THE GERMANS HERE AS WELL AS AT NATO ANY REACTION THAT WASHINGTON MIGHT HAVE TO THEIR PROPOSALS, SIMPLY TO SAVE TIME IF PAULS' INSTRUCTIONS DO NOT GIVE HIM AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS BLECH AND RUTH HAVE HINTED. HOWEVER, WE WILL HAVE TO KEEP IN MIND THAT A COROLLARY TO THE GERMAN SIGNALS IS THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR THEM TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION IN THE FACE OF AN ADVERSE CONSENSUS AFTER IT HAS BEEN PRESENTED, RATHER THAN TO WITHDRAW IT AHEAD OF TIME IN RESPONSE TO US/UK URGINGS.

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6. WE BELIEVE A MAIN CONSIDERATION FOR THE GERMANS IS NOT REPEAT NOT TO GO INTO THE MARCH 20 DISCUSSION WITH A COMPLETELY REPEAT COMPLETELY IDENTICAL POSITION TO OURS. THE POINT IS THE ONE THEY HAVE TOLD US IN RECENT EXCHANGES, NAMELY THE WISH TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE OF US-FRG BILATERALISM ON THE ERW. IN ADDITION, THERE IS THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATION THAT THEY DO NOT WANT TO BE OUT IN FRONT ON THE ERW. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOW TRYING HARD TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO MOVE QUICKLY IN OUR DIRECTION IN THE FACE OF A CONSENSUS SUPPORTING US. WHAT WE CANNOT JUDGE FROM HERE IS THE DEGREE TO WHICH EARLY FRG SUPPORT MAY BE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PRESERVE SOME SEMBLANCE OF COHESION AT THE INITIAL NAC SESSION.
END COMMENT
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN04967
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780120-0927
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780352/aaaabrom.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c4a37cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 BONN 4964
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3283929
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ERW: ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS
TAGS: PARM, MNUC, GE, NATO
To: STATE USNATO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c4a37cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014